STEM and Trades Initiatives
Scan of Jurisdictional Funding
in the Past Five Years

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Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology
Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT Project

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology

Established in 1992, the Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT) is a voluntary, non-profit national coalition of individual members and groups from across the country who advocate for a diverse and inclusive Canadian Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (SETT) workforce. They collectively support over 500,000 people in their network (CCWESTT, 2025).

CCWESTT strives for inclusion, compassion, respect, cooperation, trust and integrity in their partnerships and collaborations. The long history of the Coalition, shared core values, collaborative efforts and significant regional and national activities of member groups have provided a firm base from which CCWESTT has built a national voice for women and gender diverse people in SETT to change, build, and lead policy and practice for a diverse workforce (CCWESTT, 2025).

CCWESTT champions a gender-equitable, diverse, and inclusive Canadian SETT sector and builds alliances and partnerships, acts as a resource hub, and advocates with a strong, unified voice (CCWESTT, 2025).

1.2 Global Women in STEM

Global Women in STEM is founded by two professional engineers, Damineh Akhavan and Anja Lanz, with diverse lived experiences working in male-dominated industries.

They passionately promote human rights and equality for women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), trades, and health, and challenge the status quo through education, advocacy, innovation, and action for a world where women and girls have access to quality education, equal opportunities, and inclusive and diverse environments to achieve their full potential.

They are members of diverse organizations serving local, provincial, national, global, academic and other communities. Their goal is to provide their community with long-lasting and sustainable impact by promoting and protecting human rights through working on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals including gender equality and access to quality education.

Damineh and Anja, each individually and together, engage in strategic partnerships and collaborate with municipal, provincial, federal, global grassroots and civil society organizations, and professional associations in advocacy, youth outreach, mentorship, governance, justice, and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives. Their commitment to advancing and advocating for women in STEM, trades, and health and educating and nurturing the youth has no bounds. They see the underrepresentation of women and girls in STEM and skilled trade, and the access to quality education for youth, the ecosystem of employment, and retention of women as human

rights concerns. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

1.3 Project Overview

CCWESTT has undertaken the project "Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT" upon receiving funding from Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada. This report presents a comprehensive scan of Canadian federal, provincial, and territorial funding initiatives aimed at advancing gender equity in STEM and Trades sectors between mid-2020 and mid-2025. Commissioned by CCWESTT to support systemic change efforts, the scan identifies and analyzes government-led programs, grants, policies, and strategic partnerships designed to address gender disparities, improve representation, and foster the retention and advancement of women and gender-diverse individuals in STEM and trades.

Through a review of publicly available government sources—such as policy documents, budget announcements, program descriptions, and press releases—this report maps the landscape of equity-focused investments and interventions across all Canadian jurisdictions. It specifically captures initiatives intended to:

- Attract and recruit women and girls into STEM and skilled trades education and careers;
- Support the retention, re-entry, and career advancement of women already working in these sectors;
- Address systemic barriers and promote inclusive, culturally responsive, and equitable environments.

By highlighting key patterns, regional gaps, promising practices, and opportunities for cross-jurisdictional alignment, this scan offers a foundation for evidence-informed advocacy, policy development, and strategic collaboration. It is a vital resource for stakeholders—including policymakers, industry leaders, educators, and equity-focused organizations—seeking to strengthen inclusive economic growth through coordinated, gender-responsive investments in STEM and trades across Canada.

2.0 Scope

This report was developed as part of the CCWESTT *Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT* initiative. Following a competitive selection process, Global Women in STEM was engaged to conduct a jurisdictional scan of public funding initiatives supporting women in STEM and trades across Canada from mid-2020 to mid-2025. Moreover, the scan includes select international comparisons, with insights drawn from countries such as Australia and Lithuania, to contextualize Canada's efforts globally.

The scope of this report is defined by the following parameters to ensure a focused, evidence-based, and actionable overview of systemic change efforts:

- Geographic Coverage - The scan includes all ten provinces and three territories, providing a pan-Canadian perspective on funding and programmatic efforts.
- Timeframe - The analysis covers the most recent five-year period, from 2020 to mid-2025, capturing both ongoing and recently completed initiatives relevant to systemic gender equity in STEM and trades.
- Thematic Focus - The report concentrates on initiatives explicitly designed to enhance the participation, retention, advancement, and leadership of women and gender-diverse individuals in:
  - STEM; and
  - SETT, with particular attention to initiatives in the skilled trades.
- Types of Initiatives - Included are:
  - Publicly funded programs administered by provincial and territorial governments;
  - Government-led policies, strategies, and grant programs;
  - Strategic partnerships where provincial or territorial funding is a direct enabler—such as collaborations with educational institutions, employers, unions, and non-profit organizations.
- Data Sources - All findings are based on publicly available documentation, including:
  - Official government websites, budget announcements, press releases, and program guidelines;
  - Reports and policy documents from ministries responsible for education, labour, skills training, economic development, and status of women.

The scan intentionally excludes:

- Programs funded solely by the federal government, unless co-administered or directly supplemented by a province or territory;
- Private, philanthropic, or NGO-led initiatives not financially supported by provincial or territorial governments;
- General workforce development programs that do not specifically target women or demonstrate clear outcomes related to gender equity in STEM or trades.

This scan is intended to support CCWESTT and its member network in identifying strategic gaps, opportunities for scaling high-impact models, and areas for policy alignment and coordinated action. It serves as a foundation for informed advocacy and collaboration aimed at achieving sustainable, systemic change and inclusive growth within Canada's STEM and skilled trades sectors.

3.0 Key Findings

3.1 National Scan

Canada's national funding landscape for women in STEM and skilled trades over the past five years has been very dynamic. It has included federal investments, national programs, and systemic initiatives aimed at advancing gender equity in STEM and skilled trades.

From the research conducted for the purpose of this study, we found that:

- Diverse efforts exist in the form of the Federal Women's Program, the NSERC chairs and their NSERC grants, as well as non-profit organizations such as Society for Canadian Women in Science & Technology (SCWIST) and the Girls Action Foundation, and various provincial scholarships.
- Significant funding has been allocated to women in STEM and skilled trades programs. These include:
  - Investing of $29.8 million in 64 projects to advance women's participation in non-traditional professions, including STEM (WAGE, 2024).
  - $924,370 WAGE investment to *Build a Dream to Empower Women* supports retention and advancement for their project *Supporting Women's Access to Employment, Retention, Advancement in Male Dominated Fields* (WAGE, 2024).
  - Allocation of $160 million over three years for the Women's Program to provide funding to organizations in Canada that serve women (WAGE, 2024).
  - Double funding of $84.2 million over four years for the Union Training and Innovation Program to help underrepresented apprentices begin and succeed in skilled trade careers (WAGE, 2024).
  - The $2 billion *Women Entrepreneurship Strategy* (WES) funding focused on women entrepreneurs, including those in STEM, and targeted grants (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada [ISED], 2019)
  - Investment of $100 million in 250 projects through the *Capacity-Building Fund* under the Government of Canada's *Federal Women's Program* that advance gender equality across Canada by building organizations' capacity supports (Society for Canadian Women in Science & Technology [SCWIST], 2019)
  - Substantial funding of provinces and territories as well as community organizations to address gender-based violence (GBV), contributing to the safety and well-being of women, which is foundational for their full participation in education and the workforce, including STEM and trades.
- Underrepresentation, pay inequities, and disjointed support infrastructure are the fundamental systemic gaps observed.

- Retention: While women accounted for 31% of STEM post-secondary qualification holders aged 25-65, they accounted for only 21% of those working in STEM occupations (WAGE, 2024).
- Wage disparity: In 2021, women held 24% of energy sector jobs and based on average hourly wages, earned 85 cents for every dollar earned by men (WAGE, 2024).
- Fragmentation: Funding is spread across multiple agencies and programs, without cohesive coordination or a centralized framework, which leads to limited coordination, transparency, almost non-existing accountability, and very weak evaluation.
- Scholarship gaps: There's a lack of large-scale, national scholarship funding specifically for women students in STEM programs beyond regional offerings. The short cycle funding does not allow students to complete their programs without significant financial burdens.

Upon reviewing available data for Australia and Lithuania as countries that have made great strides in advancement of women in STEM and trades, we came across the substantial funding and subsequent accountability measures these countries have implemented.

Australia's funding landscape for women in STEM is characterized by substantial national scholarship programs, targeted grants for systemic change, and incentives for industry participation. These initiatives combine financial support with mentoring, leadership development, and a strong focus on diversity and inclusion, aiming to address both individual and structural barriers for women and girls in STEM fields (Australian Government, 2019).

Lithuania offers a mix of national and international funding opportunities for women in STEM, with a strong emphasis on scholarships, mentoring, educational reform, and support for entrepreneurship. Much of the funding and programming is delivered through partnerships with European Union initiatives, ensuring Lithuanian women benefit from both local and multinational resources aimed at closing the gender gap in STEM and trades (OECD, 2019).

3.2 Provincial and Territorial Scan

Over the past five years, Canadian provinces and territories have significantly increased funding to support women in STEM and skilled trades. This funding targets both systemic barriers and practical support, aiming to boost recruitment, retention, and success for women and girls across Canada. Across Canada's provinces and territories from 2020 to 2025, a range of targeted funding programs have supported women in STEM and skilled trades, complementing federal initiatives with region-specific strategies. Here's a snapshot of how different regions have contributed:

- British Columbia
  - Through the *Women in Trades Training (WITT)* initiative, BC provided pre-apprenticeship training and wraparound support such as childcare and

transportation. However, some institutions lost this funding as it was reallocated to other programs for women in trades. “After 16 years of hosting Women in Trades classes, Okanagan College shut down the program in 2024 after the provincial government pulled its funding to support similar programs elsewhere in B.C” (Ursel, 2024).

- The *ASTTBC Foundation* provided annual bursaries to full-time students in ASTTBC-recognized technology programs (ASTTBC, 2025).
- Scholarships and awards such as the Island Women in Science & Technology scholarship ($3,000) for women studying STEM at Vancouver Island post-secondary institutions (Island Women in Science and Technology [iWIST], 2025) and Irving K. Barber Women in Tech Scholarships - $10,000 each for up to 20 female recipients studying STEM at BC post-secondary institutions (Victoria Foundation, 2021) - provided much-needed support.
- In 2020, the BC government awarded a $250,000 grant to Achieve Anything Foundation to fund programs such as “The Sky’s No Limit – Girls Fly Too!”, promoting STEM careers in aviation, aerospace, marine, and defence (BC Government, 2018).

❖ Alberta

- Programs such as *Women Building Futures (WBF)* received provincial and industry support to train women for careers in construction, welding, and heavy equipment operation. In 2020, the Government of Alberta committed $10 million over four years to support WBF’s training programs for women aiming to enter skilled trades (Klippenstein, 2019). However, cuts to foundational learning assistance in 2024 forced WBF to cancel some of its offerings (Women Building Futures, 2024).
- Women in STEM Scholarship has funded $125,000 annually for 50 awards of each $2,500 towards women enrolled in STEM programs at Alberta’s post-secondary institutions or technical/apprenticeship programs (Government of Alberta, 2025).

❖ Saskatchewan

- Association of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of Saskatchewan (APEGS) Engineering & Geoscience Scholarships offers multiple scholarships available to students at University of Saskatchewan - ranging from $1,875 to $4,000 each (Association of Professional Engineers & Geoscientists of Saskatchewan [APEGS], 2021).
- Executive Women International Saskatchewan provides multiple scholarships for high-school students across participating chapters - with 10 x $10,000 each to be awarded (Saskatchewan High School Scholarships, 2024).

- Provincial funding of $50,000 (Nov 2021) to the Saskatchewan Science Centre for supporting free STEM coding programs for girls aged 11–16, including coding clubs and speaker events (Saskatchewan Government, 2021).
- Women Entrepreneurs Saskatchewan offers loans (up to $150K), expert guidance, mentorship, and startup funding opportunities to women entrepreneurs across sectors benefiting STEM-adjacent ventures (Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan [WESK], 2025).
- The continuation of the Founders Table program through 2021 and 2022 allowed a $60,000 per year investment. Innovation Saskatchewan welcomed more women in tech into the ecosystem, and continues building momentum in growing the tech sector in Saskatchewan (Innovation Saskatchewan, 2021).

❖ Manitoba

- Manitoba Hydro Scholarships and Bursaries offers multiple scholarships such as Maria Stanson Memorial Scholarship (1 x $1,500), First-Year Engineering Bursary (1 x $1,500), Second-to-Fourth Year Engineering Bursary (2 x $2,500), and Engineering, Trades, and Tech Bursaries (3 x $1,500) to women students (Manitoba Hydro, 2025).
- Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba offers engineering-centred bursaries (5 x $2,000) that often give preference to women or non-binary students (Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba, 2025).
- Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology offers various scholarships such as Women in Tech Entrance Scholarships for incoming women in IT and Technology ($500), Women in Trades Entrance Scholarships for women in trades programs ($500), and Sophos Women in Tech Bursary (2 x $1,500) for tech students identifying as female with financial need (Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology [MITT], 2025).

❖ Ontario

- The *Ontario Women's Directorate* funded programs to increase women's participation in skilled trades and technical colleges and organizations such as *Skills Ontario* run outreach and training programs.
- Women's Economic Security Program is a provincial funding initiative spanning across four streams, including a dedicated Women in Trades stream, and supporting pre-apprenticeship programs at colleges and training centres. "Since its inception in 2018, the Women's Economic Security Program has helped more than 2,100 women secure employment, become entrepreneurs or pursue further training and/or education. This includes helping 1,298 women start small businesses and 237 get jobs in the skilled trades" (Government of Ontario, 2025).

- There are multiple scholarships and bursaries available to women entering STEM programs in Ontario universities, including, but not limited to:
    - Ontario Tech University – Women for STEM offers entrance scholarships (20 x $5,000), plus renewable in-course awards ($2,000) and career-readiness programming with mentorship and events (Ontario Universities Info, 2025).
    - IODE Ontario – Lois Laughren Award for Women in STEM provides scholarships to women pursuing STEM studies at Ontario institutions at 5 x $2,000 annually over 5 years (IODE Ontario, 2025).
    - De Beers STEM Scholarships for Canadian Women (10 x $4,500) is awarded to women in STEM entering Ontario universities and colleges (De Beers Group, 2025).
    - Hydro One Awards offers scholarship (10 x $5,000) and paid internships for women in engineering (Hydro One, 2025).
    - Opterus Helen Rose STEM Award ($5,000) provides funding for Canadian women aged 18–26 enrolled or planning to enroll in STEM education (Opterus, 2025).
- The Ontario Network of Women in Engineering is a coalition of 26 engineering schools providing a comprehensive list of scholarships, internships, and mentorship opportunities (Global STEM Women, 2025).
- Tools Grant (ranging from $1,000 to $3,000) and Apprentice Development Benefit are non-repayable grants for apprentices in construction and industrial trades, motive-power trades, and service trades (Government of Ontario, 2025).

❖ Quebec

While Quebec organizations could access federal funding, they have to comply with the province's *M-30 Act*, requiring provincial approval for certain funding agreements.

- The *Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour National Conference Grant* ($2,000) is offered three times a year to support conferences and events that advance women in STEM (Chaire pour les femmes en sciences et en génie au Québec [CFSG], 2025).
- UQAM "Fonds pour les femmes en sciences", within the Faculty of Science and established in 2021, awards annual graduate-level bursaries (from Master's at $6,000 to Doctorate at $9,000) in categories such as Leadership, Ambition, and Perseverance (Gauvreau, 2024).
- Polytechnique Montréal Bourses and Outreach Ordre de la Rose blanche provides non-renewable scholarships for graduate women in engineering, valued at $50,000 (Polytechnique Montreal, 2025).

- Provincially-funded NovaScience & Évol programs offer financial and project support for EDI in science, including female entrepreneurs and researchers, at approximately $34.1 million from 2022 to 2024 (Gouvernement du Québec, 2025).

❖ Nova Scotia

- Techsploration Awards offers scholarships ranging from $1,000 to $2,000 through partnerships with universities (Acadia, CBU, Saint Mary's), Engineers Nova Scotia, and DeWalt Canada for Techsploration alumnae and young women and gender-diverse youth in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island who attend Techsploration schools (Techsploration, 2025).
- Nova Scotia Power offers multiple awards (6 × $2,500) and paid internships to women in Trades, Engineering, and Technology (Nova Scotia Power, 2025).
- WISEatlantic and NSERC CISE - Atlantic Region rebranded NSERC Chair program promotes Atlantic-level advocacy, mentorship networks, Girls-Get-WISE camps, career spotlight initiatives, and monthly networking for early-career women (WISE Atlantic, 2025).
- CAGIS Halifax (Girls in Science) offers Monthly STEM programming for girls aged 10–16, exposing them to career pathways via workplace visit (WISE Atlantic, 2025).

❖ Prince Edward Island (PEI)

- There are multiple scholarships and bursaries offered in PEI through PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women awarded to female-identifying students with demonstrated financial need including PEIACSW Bursaries (Migrant Worker, Refugee, and Post-secondary) for women-identifying PEI residents, including those in STEM fields (University of Prince Edward Island, 2025).
- In 2024, Interministerial Women's Secretariat (IWS) Grants provided $450,000 to fund organizations offering STEM/trades programming for girls and women (Government of Prince Edward Island, 2024).
- In 2022, IWS Grant provided funding for community group projects that focus on encouraging women and girls to pursue opportunities in STEM, skilled trades, and leadership, as well as engaging men and boys in gender-based violence prevention. Individual community-led projects received between $12,600 and $29,000 (Government of Prince Edward Island, 2022).
- In 2020, the PEI Interministerial Women's Secretariat funded a $17,000 research project "Retaining Women in Trades Research" to identify why women are leaving trades and develop better retention strategies (Government of Prince Edward Island, 2020).
- Trade HERizons is a fully-funded career exploration and pre-trades program for "women and gender-diverse people, focused on exploring trades and technology

careers, enhancing essential skills, career exploration and personal development." It is sponsored through Canada–PEI Labour Market Agreements through the provincial Department of Workforce, Advanced Learning and Population (Women's Network PEI, 2025).

- New Brunswick
  - The Jocelyne Roy-Vienneau Undergraduate Engineering Scholarships are offered for second-year female engineering students at UNB and Université de Moncton (Engineers Geoscientists New Brunswick, 2025).
  - WISEatlantic and NSERC CISE - Atlantic Region sponsor community-led programming in Atlantic Canada, including NB, such as Girls Get WISE camps, school outreach, career services, and public events as well as to catalyze STEM programs for underrepresented youth (WiSE Atlantic, 2025).
  - STEP-W: Skilled Trades Exploration Program for Women is a 16-week free training program with skills, safety, math, and direct apprenticeship placement (MAP Strategic Workforce Services, 2025).
  - Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy – Women in Skilled Trades Initiative is a national funding that rolled out in 2024, including the New Boots retention project in Saint John with $857K for tradeswomen support (Government of Canada, 2024).
- Newfoundland and Labrador
  - The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador committed $4 million to Sandpiper Ventures Fund to invest in the Halifax-based VC fund that targets women-led tech companies, ensuring funding flows to local female-founded startups (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2025).
  - The Memorial University Equinor Scholarship for Women in STEM offers a renewable ($6,490 first year plus 4% annually) scholarship for female-identifying students entering second year STEM or applied science programs (Memorial University, 2025).
  - In 2022 and 2024, Hydro & WRDC Trades & Technology Scholarships (6 x $1,500) were awarded to women and gender-diverse individuals pursuing trades and technology at CNA/MUN, in fields such as welding, engineering technology, and mechanics (Newfoundland Labrador Hydro, 2024).
  - Hebron Women in Science & Engineering Scholarship (MUN Engineering/ Geoscience/ Environmental/ Chemistry) is awarded to female students based on financial need and merit, including first-years (Memorial University, 2025).
  - PomeGran and College of the North Atlantic Scholarships are two $2,500 annual awards in Computer Systems, Networking, Video Game Art & Design, explicitly encouraging women and underrepresented groups (PomeGran, 2025).

- Yukon, Northwest Territories (NWT), Nunavut

  Territorial funding often flows through Indigenous and community-led organizations, with a focus on local trades training and STEM outreach in remote communities.

  - Association of Professional Engineers Yukon offers two awards annually ($2,000 each) with one specifically reserved for female and/or First Nations applicants pursuing engineering (Engineers Yukon, 2025).
  - Apprenticeship Funding through Yukon Student Aid includes weekly allowances, travel, accommodation, and book support—applicable to women training in STEM fields such as trades and tech.
  - Yukon Women in Trades and Technology (YWITT) offers workshops, advocacy, and mentorship, and supports women and gender-diverse individuals at all career stages in trades and tech (YWITT, 2025).
  - Schools North Apprenticeship Program Northwest Territories provides high school students with paid trades experience and Red Seal hours while still in school (Government of Canada, 2024).
  - The NWT Indigenous Skills & Employment Training Strategy offers Indigenous women and gender-diverse people funding for trades training, job creation, self-employment, and wage subsidies tailored to community needs (Native Women's Association of the NWT, 2025).
  - Aurora College and Aurora Research Institute NSERC PromoScience grants totaling $1.1 M fund STEM outreach across over 20 communities and reaching over 6,000 youth and educators in Nunavut (Government of Canada, 2025).
  - The Danielle Moore Scholarship is intended to assist Nunavummiut with ongoing formal and informal education and skills development (Nunavut News, 2024).
  - The Government of Nunavut's ALTS program funds technical training—including apprentice technical training, workplace safety, and pre-trades courses—adjacent to apprenticeship (Government of Nunavut, 2025).
  - The federal "Women in the Skilled Trades" Initiative consists of multi-million-dollar CAS-funded mentorship and retention projects, which include Nunavut as a target region, offering wraparound support, recruitment, and networking for women apprentices (Government of Canada, 2024).

Programs such as the *Women in the Skilled Trades Initiative* and grants from the *Canadian Women's Foundation* were accessible across provinces and territories, often delivered in partnership with local colleges, unions, and nonprofits.

Despite progress between 2020 and 2025, several gaps persist in funding for women in STEM and trades across Canadian provinces and territories:

- Uneven access across regions, and provincial and territorial initiatives
- Lack of standardized reporting
- Underrepresentation in grant awards
- Limited national and provincial coordination
- Short-term funding cycles
- Insufficient Early Intervention and Outreach funding

4.0 Strategic Recommendations

The following recommendations are the result of our thorough scan and study of Canadian national, provincial, and territorial funding for women in STEM and trades, and comparing it to countries such as Lithuania and Australia. While Canada provides more extensive, multi-level funding and support structures for women in STEM and trades, Lithuania's funding is more EU-centric, with a primary focus on STEM in academia and entrepreneurship. Canadian women benefit from a wider range of scholarships, industry partnerships, and targeted trades funding, whereas Lithuanian women have greater access to EU programs and international opportunities. In contrast, Australia has a coordinated national strategy with a focus on higher education, research, and industry pathways for women in STEM. While there is strong support for mentoring and leadership, funding for women in trades and vocational pathways is less developed, and workforce participation remains low despite gains in university enrolment.

4.1 Enhanced Accountability Mechanisms

While there are clear commitments and some progress toward accountability and transparency in funding of women in STEM and trades programs, especially at the federal level and within leading organizations, these practices are not standardized or universal across Canada. Gaps remain in consistent reporting, independent oversight, and transparent evaluation of outcomes, underscoring the need for more robust and coordinated accountability frameworks.

In contrast, Australia has strengthened their accountability mechanisms to support women in STEM and trades through data-driven project evaluation and proposed central oversight to ensure sustained progress. (Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering [ATSE], 2023)

On the other hand, Lithuania combines EU-backed structural change funding, mentorship and fellowship programs, and increasing data-driven oversight to promote gender equity in STEM and trades. As part of its gender equality agenda, the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015-2021 was approved by the Lithuanian government in 2015 where the Action Plan for 2018-2021 lays out the implementation of the Programme. "It sets out concrete actions, implementation deadlines, responsible institutions, state budget allocations for each

action, and assessment criteria. Almost all ministries are included in the implementation of the Action Plan where all priorities are enshrined" (OECD, 2019).

4.2 Disaggregated Data and Transparency Measures

Disaggregated data, which is information broken down by specific identity factors such as gender, age, region, and discipline, plays a key role in making funding for women in STEM and skilled trades in Canada and across provinces more transparent and accountable. Transparency is measured by the extent to which programs collect and report data. Moreover, disaggregated data allows the public, funding agencies, and advocacy organizations to monitor and evaluate progress, identify gaps in representation, and hold institutions and funded projects accountable.

4.3 Funding Parity Across Regions

Federal support offers consistent gender-targeted funding nationwide, especially for trades and entrepreneurship. Provinces vary significantly in funding scale, with Ontario and Atlantic regions leading in volume, Quebec strong in university-level support, and Territories offering small-scale but inclusive community funding. Overall, while access exists across Canada, parity remains uneven, especially at the graduate level and in larger scholarship offerings.

- National Policy and Federal Coordination
- Expand Industry Partnerships and Philanthropic Investment
- Harmonize Provincial Scholarship Systems
- Boost Mentorship, Retention and Re-entry Programs
- Build a Public, Open Data Portal on Equity in Funding

In Australia, there is funding disparity across regions as women in regional, rural, and remote areas face greater barriers to access. Most research and larger regional grants are awarded to metropolitan universities, which leaves regional institutions with less funding and fewer opportunities for women in these areas (Singh, 2025).

4.4 Building Solutions by Bridging Sectors

To address persistent barriers and accelerate progress for women in STEM and skilled trade fields, organizations must move beyond siloed efforts and commit to intentional, cross-sector collaboration. By bridging academic, industry, government, community, and grassroots organizations, we can co-create innovative, scalable solutions rooted in shared values and diverse perspectives. Working together allows us to align resources, amplify impact, and ensure that efforts to support women are intersectional, inclusive, and responsive to real-world challenges. Collaborative action builds a stronger ecosystem where knowledge, networks, and strategies are

shared—resulting in more equitable, sustainable, and measurable outcomes for women across all areas of science, engineering, trades, and technology.

In Australia, university and industry partnerships (such as Schools Pathway Program) and multi-sector collaborations (such as Construction Training Fund) through alignment of funding have produced a highly skilled, future-ready workforce equipped for both traditional trades and emerging STEM careers (ACT Government, 2024).

4.5 Long-term Funding Cycles

Short-term funding can help with access, but they don't support retention, lending to successful graduation, or prolonged career progression. Long-term funding cycles should start in early years, continue through post-secondary, support transitions into the workforce, and enable upskilling or re-entry later in life. Implementing long-term funding cycles for women in STEM and trades is essential to move beyond one-time scholarships and achieve systemic, sustainable impact.

4.6 Funding for Retention of Women in the Workforce

Although there are multiple types of funding available to girls interested in STEM subjects and women undertaking studies in STEM and trades programs, there is no integrated provincial and national strategy focusing exclusively on women's full career pathway from undergrad through professional development. In addition, there is no financial support available to women in STEM and trades workplaces when they are faced with challenges, such as harassment or gender-based violence, that often result in women leaving their male-dominated fields.

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